REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

OF

HETTON.

1920.

Easington Lane:
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1921.

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FOR THE YEAR 1920.

EASINGTON LANE,
HETTON-LE-HOLE.
APRIL, 1921.

To the Members of the Urban District Council of Hetton.

GENTLEMEN—

I have the honour to submit to you the Annual Report of the Vital Statistics and sanitary conditions of your district for the year 1920.

The Registrar General has supplied an estimate of the population of the district namely 16,630, upon which I have calculated the different rates appearing in the Report. This estimate is to my mind rather on the low side, but at the present time, so long after the census, and after the disturbance of population caused by the war, it is impossible to arrive at anything like a correct estimate.

There were 667 births (327 males and 340 females), probably the largest number of births ever recorded in the district. The birth rate was 40·11 per 1,000 as compared with 25·4 for England and Wales.

There were 242 deaths, a rate of 14·55 per 1,000. The natural increase of population was 225.

Causes of Death.	Males.	Females.
All Causes	134	108
Measles	1	2
Diphtheria and Croup ...	0	1
Influenza	2	1
Erysipelas	0	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	7	9
Tuberculous Meningitis ...	2	0
Other Tuberculous Diseases ...	4	2
Cancer, malignant disease ...	11	5
Rheumatic Fever	2	1
Meningitis	2	2
Organic Heart Disease ...	6	9
Bronchitis	18	11
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	8	3
Other Respiratory Diseases ...	1	3
Diarrhœa &c. (under 2 years) ...	5	3
Nephritis and Bright's Disease ...	1	3
Parturition, apart from puerperal fever	0	3
Congenital Debility	21	16
Violence, apart from suicide ...	4	0
Suicide	1	0
Other defined diseases	37	33
Causes ill-defined or unknown ...	1	0

INFANT MORTALITY.

There were 76 deaths of infants under one year of age, a rate of 113 per 1,000 births, as compared with 109 in 1919, 119 in 1918 and 154 in 1917.

It would be a great advantage to the district, more especially during the months summer diarrhœa is prevalent, if dried milk could be easily available to necessitous cases. At present the County Council have a centre at Houghton-le-Spring, from which dried milk at cost price or less than cost

BIRTH-RATE, DEATH-RATE and ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY during the Year 1920.

	Birth-Rate per 1000 total Population.	Annual Death-rate per 1000 Population.									Rate per 1000 Births	
		All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Small-pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping-cough.	Diphtheria	Influenza	Violence.	Diarrhœa & Enteritis (under 2 yrs)	Total deaths under One Year.
England and Wales	25·4	12·4	0·01	0·00	0·19	0·04	0·11	0·15	0·28	0·48	8·3	80
96 Great Towns, including London												
Census Populations exceeding 50,000	26·2	12·5	0·01	0·00	0·22	0·04	0·14	0·16	0·31	0·43	10·4	85
148 Smaller Towns (Census Populations— 20,000—50,000)	24·9	11·3	0·02	0·00	0·19	0·03	0·10	0·14	0·27	0·38	7·8	80
London	26·5	12·4	0·01	0·00	0·22	0·05	0·17	0·22	0·30	0·47	9·5	75
Hetton Urban District... ...	40·11	14·55	0·00	0·00	0·18	0·00	0·00	0·06	0·18	0·24	11·99	113·9

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price is supplied. I have drawn the County Council's attention to the need of a supply being available at Hetton owing to the time taken and expense of getting to Houghton, but so far without success.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

The Census population in 1911 was 15,678 and the estimated population for 1920 was 17,500.

The district may be described as a basin surrounded by rising ground on all sides except at the north end, from which the sewage leaves with a gentle fall to the Sewage Disposal Farm.

The chief occupation of the inhabitants is coal mining. Very few are employed in other industries.

The amount of poor law relief given in the district during the year 1920 was £4151 2s. 10d.

WATER.

The whole water supply of the district is pumped from lime stone strata and is stored in two reservoirs—one near Eppleton Colliery and one at the top of Easington Lane. There is only one pump available, and in June this pump broke down, and during part of June and the early part of July the water supply entirely failed, and the Council had to send its water cart round the streets with water from the Bull Well.

The water is supplied by a private local company which has an arrangement with the Lambton and Hetton Collieries Company, Ltd., for pumping the water. The Water Company is without statutory powers and would appear to have no real responsibility for the maintainence of the supply ; moreover, the Lambton & Hetton Collieries Company are under no obligation to continue pumping the water, and could discontinue pumping at any time if they so desired or found conditions more unfavourable. This, to my mind, makes the supply precarious and unsatisfactory.

After the pump broke down, the Council complained to the Water Company and requested that the pump be duplicated. Much correspondence passed, and discussions took place, and I believe the Company ultimately agreed to dupli-

cate the pump; but at the end of the year I doubt if anything further was done. The question of duplicating the pump is a pressing matter and should receive urgent attention, as with only one pump available the supply is liable to fail at any time.

The proposed six inch main was laid down the High Street as far as the Brickgarth and connected up with another large main in Elemore Lane. This has greatly improved the supply in that part of the district.

Towards the close of the year it was reported that owing to the increased cost of pumping, of labour and of material the water rate would be raised 2½ times the rate obtaining in December 1920. This being regarded as a very large increase, the local Miners' Lodges took up the matter with the Water Company, and ultimately a 75 per cent increase was agreed to, for which result the lodges are to be congratulated.

During the year numerous complaints were received about failure of supply at different hours of the day. I have not been able to find out the exact cause of this. It might be due to too small a pipe supplying several houses, so that when one or two are drawing water, the supply is cut off the others; or it might be due to the water being cut off to conserve the supply.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

There is no river passing through the district and the streams are free from pollution.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The drains and sewers have not given much trouble during the year. The contact beds at the sewage farm, which in the previous year had been disturbed by ground subsidence, have received attention, but subsidence still exists. The existing sewers and drains are good. The whole of the district was re-sewered some 26 years ago.

CLOSET ACCOMODATION.

There are in the district—

280 Water-Closets.	2688 Ash-Closets.
50 Privies.	23 Pail-Closets.

The privies are being steadily done away with, the majority of them being converted into ash-closets, which is the prevailing type of convenience.

SCAVENGING.

This important work has been carried out for several years by hired datal labour. The rate of pay at the beginning of the year was 21/- per day for horse, cart and man, during the year this rate was increased, and at the close of the year the rate paid was 24/- per day. The ash-closet is the prevailing type of convenience and is so constructed that the seat lifts up the full internal width of the closet for the ready deposit of ashes and household refuse. They are cleaned out weekly and the amount of refuse to be removed is great. In a collier's home, where there are several workers, the fire is kept burning practically day and night the whole year round. This is due to the large amount of cooking which has to be undertaken at so many different times of the day, as well as heating water for baths.

The Council purchased two Ford motors, with Biaco attachment for this work, one of which has been used for the work since October, and at the close of the year the second one was ready for the work. The motors are fitted with sheet steel tipping bodies. The bodies are tipped by hand and are covered with a close fitting waterproof sheet. The cubical capacity of the bodies is over two cubic yards. These motors carry about 1½ cartloads and in addition make more journeys than the horses and carts. I am of opinion that these vehicles are a great improvement on the old method.

The tip is the method of disposal of refuse in this district. There are two tips in the district, one known as Bull Wells Tip and the other known as the Gyhll Tip. Both are a considerable distance from the nearest dwellings.

Number of Visits made by the Inspector.

Housing	663
In connection with Infectious Diseases	287
Nuisances	293
Scavenging	426
Refuse Tips	229
Slaughter Houses	88
Water supply	44
Cowsheds	15
Factories and Workshops ...	80
Total...	2125

SUMMARY of Work done in the Sanitary Inspector's Department during the year 1920.

Public Health Acts.	Number of Informal written Notices by Inspector.	Number of Formal Notices by order of Authority.	Number of Nuisances abated after Notice.
Dwelling Houses & Schools:			
Foul Conditions ...	4	...	4
Structural Defects ...	58	8	23
Overcrowding ...	...	...	...
Cowsheds	2	...	
Bakehouses ...	18		16
Slaughter Houses	14	...	14
Ashpits and Privies ...	10	1	9
Deposits of Refuse & Manure	4	1	4
Water-closets	13	5	15
Defective Yard Paving ...	38	5	16
House Drainage—			
Defective Traps ...	6	...	6
Other Faults	25	1	24
Water Supply ...	2	...	2
Pigsties	3		3
Animals Improperly Kept...	5	...	5
Other Nuisances	16	...	14
Ash-closets ...	43	9	36

Precautions against Infectious Disease.

Lots of Infectious Bedding stoved or destroyed (No Steam Disinfector) ...	ALL
Houses Disinfected after Infectious Disease ...	98

General.

Number of New Houses erected during the year	7
Ashpit-privies converted into Ash-closets...	9
do. do. Water-closets	2
Ash-closets do. do.	4
Total number of Water-closets in district	280
do. Ash-closets do.	2698
do. Ash-pit privies do.	50

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

There are two Common Lodging Houses in the district, both of which are under the same management. The houses are well ventilated and kept clean. The property is old and of poor class. There are no underground sleeping rooms in the district.

SCHOOLS.

The Schools in the district remain overcrowded. The defects of the ash-closets at the temporary School in the Brickgarth, mentioned in my last report, have been attended to.

MILK SUPPLY.

There is a greater supply of milk than was the case during 1919. The quality on the whole is good. Occasionally one comes across milk which appears to be of poor quality, and in my opinion, samples for analysis ought to be taken more frequently.

The dairies and cowsheds were inspected frequently. In two cases the cowsheds were found unsatisfactory. In one case the roof was defective, and in the other case the cowsheds were entirely unsuitable to be used as such. With regard to the defective roof, the agent had expressed his willingness to have same attended to. We have taken up the question of the other property with the agent and we have hopes that the necessary works will be carried out.

No action has been taken under the Milk (Mothers and Children) Order, 1919.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

The slaughter houses have been inspected periodically and generally speaking they appear to be well kept. Structurally, many of the slaughter-houses are not up to the standard of modern requirements. It is very desirable that animals slaughtered should be under the direct and easy supervision of your officers, and this can only be carried out in a public abattoir.

Various inspections are made during the time of slaughtering and the meat was always found to be of good quality. No action was taken under the provisions of Section 117 of the Public Health Act, 1875.

There are 14 slaughter-houses in the district. This is the same number as in the year 1914. Since the year 1914, one butcher has given up business, but a new business has commenced.

BAKEHOUSES.

The bakehouses have been inspected frequently, certain defects as to cleansing and whitewashing were found. By the request of the Council a circular letter to the occupiers of retail bakehouses was issued, pointing out that a high standard of cleanliness should always be maintained.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year your district was free from epidemics. In all 116 notifications were received, namely: Diphtheria 19, Scarlet Fever 46, Enteric Fever 5, Pneumonia 24, Dysentry 1 Erysipelas 11, Malaria 3, Opthalmia Neonatorum 7. It is satisfactory to note that in each of the Zymotic Diseases the death rate was lower than the corresponding rate for England and Wales. There were no deaths from scarlet fever, enteric fever or whooping cough.

During the year, 27 cases of scarlet fever, 14 cases of diphtheria, and 4 cases of enteric fever were admitted to the Rainton Bridge Fever Hospital.

In addition to the above, two cases of scarlet fever were admitted from the Rural District of Houghton-le-Spring.

I am pleased to report that your Isolation Hospital was found adequate. From the following table it will be seen from which periods of the year the cases were admitted to your hospital from the district.

Month.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Enteric Fever.	Totals
January	...	9	...	9
February	3	3	...	6
April	2	1	...	3
May	1	...	...	1
June	2	...	1	3
July	2	...	2	4
August	5	...	...	5
September	4	1	...	5
October	6	...	...	6
November	1	...	1	2
December	1	...	...	1
Totals ...	27	14	4	45

Towards the end of the year electric light was installed at the Hospital, in place of the old system of oil lamps, and this has been a great improvement.

TUBERCULOSIS.

There were 31 cases of Tuberculosis notified, as compared with 53 cases in the previous year. A number of cases from the district were admitted to various sanatoria, mostly cases in the incipient stage of the disease or suspected cases—those which were most likely to benefit from such residence. Unfortunately there is no adequate provision for advanced cases of Phthisis, and these are generally left at their homes, and are a great source of danger to other members of their family and to subsequent tenants of these infected houses. This is a great defect in the scheme at present available for dealing with the disease.

The County Council Tuberculosis Dispensary at Sherburn Hospital is open on Tuesdays at 9 a.m. for women and children, and on Fridays at the same hour for men. On these days the Dispensary is open to anyone who suspects he or she is suffering from tuberculosis.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

This is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector and myself. The Council's Hospital for Infectious Diseases at Rainton Bridge has accommodation for 20 persons, and includes one ward for diphtheria, one ward for scarlet-fever, and two small wards for enteric fever. The accommodation is generally adequate.

The Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1890. has been adopted, also Parts 2, 3, 4, 6, and Section 95 of Part 10 of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1907, and the Private Street Works Act, 1892.

The following Bye-laws are in operation :—Nuisances, New Streets and Buildings, Slaughter Houses, Dairies and Cowsheds, and Common Lodging Houses.

The Durham County Council has an arrangement with the Bacteriological Laboratory of the Newcastle College of Medicine by which examinations are carried out free to Medical Practitioners, particularly of swabs from throats for Diphtheria Bacillus, of Sputum for Tubercle Bacillus, and also for Widal reation for typhoid fever. The local Medical Practitioners frequently take advantage of this arrangement.

HOUSING.

I am sorry to say that the year 1920 did not bring any improvement. The house shortage in your district is appalling. The total number of houses erected during the year was seven. which were almost ready for occupation at the close of the year. The house shortage in this district has been a pressing matter for years. This is a severe handicap to your Council and its officers. In short it means that the necessary steps cannot be taken to remedy the deplorable conditions which exist at a great number of dwellings—dwellings which should be closed and demolished with the least possible delay.

It is a most difficult matter to endeavour to patch up this class of property. I consider that in making requests or serving notices on owners of old property it ought to be seriously considered whether it is just and reasonable to ask an owner to spend any considerable sum of money on the alteration or repairing of old property in a congested area where demolition ought to be insisted on. It would be a kindness to prevent owners from spending money on old property which is not worth it. A census of dwellings was taken out by your Inspector, in May 1919, when it appeared that in 162 cases the houses were occupied by more than one family. This in itself is a sufficient indication of the house shortage in the district to say nothing of overcrowding—which exists to no small extent—and the large number of insanitary dwellings which are still occupied and which should be closed.

It is well known to your Council, that at the present time, your Officers are not only seriously handicapped, as they have been for years, but are now absolutely fast in trying to enforce closing orders. This is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs, and one which, I am sorry to say, some landlords are pleased to take advantage of.

A great proportion of the houses are old and delapidated, with low attics. The general character of the defects found is the lack of damp-proof courses. Many of the houses are built with magasium limestone walls, which are mostly perished.

Informal notices are served and there is an arrangement with the Lambton and Hetton Collieries Company, Limited, who are the largest property owners in the district, to have repairs remedied without the service of notices.

UNHEALTHY AREAS.

On the 25th May 1920, I made Official Representation to your Council under Part 1 of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, of two areas in your district which I have designated the Hetton Area and the Murton Lane area respectively, details of which are as follows :—

Hetton Area.

The Hetton Area consists of two parts as follows—

That part of the Parish of Hetton-le-Hole lying between the Front Street and the Lambton and Hetton Colleries railway, also that part of the Parish of Hetton-le-Hole known as the north side of High Richard Street, the whole of High John Street, the whole of Pemberton Street (including Shaw's Row), the whole of Coach Row, the whole of Barnes Street, the whole of the east side of Railway Street and the houses known as Nos. 15, 16 and 17 Hetton Square.

Easington Lane Area.

This area is that part of the Parish of Hetton-le-Hole known as the south side of Murton Lane, the whole of Duncan Street, the whole of George Street (Easington Lane) and premises between the said George Street and the High Street, also the premises situated between the Easington Lane Post Office and the corner of High Street and Murton Lane (known as 111, High Street).

REPORT of PROGRESS of HOUSING SCHEMES.

Easington Lane Scheme. First Contract of 12 Houses.

The contract for the erection of twelve houses on land land owned by the Council was let to local builders. Mr. Doxford signed a contract for five houses and Mr. Sparrow for seven houses. These two contracts comprising two blocks of four houses, one block of three, and a single house. Each house had the following accomodation :—Parlour, living room, scullery and three bedrooms with the usual conveniences. The contract price averaged £998 per house. By December these contracts were in progress, the single house was slated in, the internal partitions fixed and floors laid. Two of the houses in the first block of four were slated in, floors laid and staircase fixed, the other two houses of this block were roofed ready for the slater. The other block of four houses were erected to first floor level, and the foundations were cut for the block of three.

2nd Contract for 188 Houses.

Plans, specifications and quantities had been approved for 188 houses, eight of which had the following accommodation :—Living room, scullery, three bedrooms, bathroom and usual conveniences. The remaining houses had similar accommodation to the first twelve. Tenders have been submitted to the Council for these 188 houses, and the architect had been instructed to take the matter up with the Commissioner, with a view of obtaining the approval of the Ministry to commence with these additional houses. At the December meeting of the Housing Committee, the Architect reported that he had discussed the tenders with the Housing Commissioner, and acting on his suggestion he had prepared Bill of Reduction, with a view to reducing the cost of the houses. These Bills of Reduction had been prepared and handed to the builders, and the Architect was now awaiting their return so that he could arrange to discuss the modified tenders with the Commissioner and Council

It had been decided to build a certain proportion of these 188 houses in cement concrete or some form of construction other than brick, the remainder of the houses to be built in brick. On the 26th November a tender from Messrs. P. D. Hayes & Son, Contractors, Stockport, of £14,555 for Streets Sewers for 200 houses on the Easington Lane scheme was accepted. By December a commencement had been made on this contract and part of the sewers had been laid.

HETTON SITE.

Plans had been prepared and approved by the Commissioner for 418 houses on the Hetton Site. Tenders for these houses were submitted at the December meeting of the Housing Committee. A letter was read from Messrs. Stephen Easten, Ltd., stating that they were unable to tender until later, and it was decided to defer the consideration of the tenders until the later meeting. It is intended to build a certain percentage of these houses in some special form of contruction and the remainder to be in brick. In this scheme 100 houses were to have living room, scullery, 2 bedrooms and bathroom ; 100 houses having living room, scullery, three bedrooms and bathroom, and the remainder to have parlour, living room, scullery, three bedrooms and bathroom, with the usual conveniences.

APPENDICES.

HOUSING CONDITIONS.

STATISTICS—Year ending 31st December, 1920.

1.—General.

(1)	Estimated population	16,630
(2)	General death-rate	14·55
(3)	Death-rate from tuberculosis	1·44
(4)	Infantile mortality	113
(5)	Number of dwelling-houses of all classes	3477
(6)	Number of working-class dwelling-houses ...	
(7)	Number of new working-class houses erected...	7

2.—Unfit Dwelling-houses.

I. Inspection.

(1)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	663
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910 ...	230
(3)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	80
(4)	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	215

II.—Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notice.

	Number of defective dwelling-houses improved in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	580

III.—Action under Statutory Powers.

(A) *Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c.. Act, 1919.*

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ...	9
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit—	
(a) by owners	5
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	0
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close ...	1

(B) *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	30
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied—	
(a) by owners	22
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	3

(C) *Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909.*

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	6
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	6
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit	0
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	0

3.—Unhealthy Areas.

Areas represented to the Local authority with a view to Improvement Schemes under (a), Part I, or (b), Part II, of the Act of 1890 :

(1)	Name of area— (a) Hetton ; (b) Murton Lane.	
(2)	Acreage	8·22 acres
(3)	Number of working-class houses in area ...	401
(4)	Number of working-class persons to be displaced	1243

4.—Number of houses not complying with the building byelaws erected with consent of Local Authority under section 25 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919 Nil.

5.—Staff engaged on housing work with, briefly, the duties of each officer...Only made Official Representation.

In the preparation of this Report I have received, as in former years, very considerable help from your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Butterworth, and the accurate information on the progress of the housing schemes has been supplied by your Architect, Mr. Fennell: to both of whom I wish to acknowledge here the help given.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

R. MACLEOD, M.B., Ch.B.

ADDENDA.—*(See following page).*

Addenda.

REPAIRS TO COLLIERY PROPERTY.

Mr. Bell, Agent to the Lambton and Hetton Collieries Company, Limited, has kindly supplied me, as in former years, with the list of improvements carried out to Colliery Property.

I give below the list of improvements carried out during the year 1920.

Windows made to open ...	25.
Doors or frames repaired ...	26.
Spouting repaired or renewed ...	151.
Yard gates	6.
Fireplaces	65.
Walls and ceilings	31.
Ash-closets repaired ...	21.
Pantries repaired ...	5.
Floors	12.
New coal houses	6.
New ash-closets ...	15.
Yard walls repaired ...	18.
New cement floors	35.
Coal houses altered	18.
Houses painted back and front...	146.

In addition to the above, the footpaths in Jane Street, Blossom Street, Maudlin Street, William Street, Railway Terrace, Kenton Row, Eppleton Row and part of Edward Street have been ashphalted. This is a considerable improvement to these Streets.